



Family Tree Next Steps: Merging Principles

MERGING DUPLICATE RECORDS IN FAMILY TREE

Family Tree contains possible duplicate records. Some may pertain to the same person and may be merged. Others may pertain to a person with a similar name but represent an entirely different person and need to be marked “not a match.”

Before merging records, consider the following:


- Review the reason statements, sources, and discussions on the person's record.
- **Know what pieces of information are already well documented and explained.**
- **Have paper and pencil to keep notes.**
- **If possible, have a well-documented genealogical database, book, or other resource to use as a reference.**

To find and merge duplicate records, use the following steps:

1. Open the person's details page. On the right side of the page, in “Tools,” click on “Possible Duplicates.” A list of possible duplicates may appear.
2. If someone on the list is clearly not a match, click “Not a Match.”
3. If the ID # of a possible duplicate, is known, but not on the list, click “Merge by ID” and enter the ID#.



Go to: [John David Wunderlich](#)



Person
John David Wunderlich
9QPY-18F

Events

birth 22 Nov 1793, „Pennsylvania
death after 1850, Seneca, Ohio, U.S.A.

Parents

Spouse

• Nancy Laman


Possible Duplicates

Merge by ID

Not a Match

Possible Duplicates for John David Wunderlich

Matching People (2 results)

Person	Events	Parents	Spouse
<div><div>John David Wunderlich MYDH-2V8 ●●●●●</div></div>	<div>3</div>		<div>4</div> <div>• Nancy Layman</div> <div><div>Review Merge</div><div>Not a Match</div></div>
<div><div>John Pratt M2GS-BQF ●●●○○</div></div>			<div>2</div> <div>• Sarah Weizel</div> <div><div>Review Merge</div><div>Not a Match</div></div>

4. To review a duplicate that is on the list, click the “Review Merge” button to compare the information in detail.

The duplicate records appear side by side. The left side is the Primary Record and information in that column will be retained. The information on the right is the duplicate record and anything left there will be archived for a couple of years then deleted.

Edward Charles Bruce Tyndall

MB8M-SHB

Deceased

[Life Sketch](#) | [Vitals](#) | [Other](#) | [Family](#) | [Sources](#)

[Switch Positions](#)

Life Sketch

Vital Information

[Open Details](#)

Name

Birth Name

Edward Charles Bruce Tyndall

Sex

Male

Death

Deceased

Edward Charles Bruce Tyndall

K4X6-64X

Deceased

Edward Charles Bruce Tyndall and information remaining in this column are deleted at the end of the merge process.

Name

[✓ Replace](#) | [⊗ Reject](#)

Birth Name

Edward Charles Bruce Tyndall

Sex

[✓ Replace](#) | [⊗ Reject](#)

Male

Death

[✓ Replace](#) | [⊗ Reject](#)

Deceased

5. Compare the information on the left with the information on the right. Consider the options below that indicate what to do with the information on the right.
 - a. Do Nothing: The information on the right will be archived. Information on the left will be kept.
 - b. Add: Will add the information on the right to the record on the left.
 - c. Replace: Will replace the information on the left with the information on the right.
 - d. Reject: Leaves the information on the right and is the same as do nothing.

✓ Replace
|
⊗ Reject

+ Add
|
⊗ Reject

6. When considering whether to replace a spouse, child, or parent, verify the information for accuracy.

At the bottom of the page:

7. If the records are not about the same person, click **"Not a Match."**
8. To ignore any changes and return to the "Possible Duplicates" screen, click **"Cancel"**
9. If the records are about the same person, click **"Continue Merge."** The merge confirmation appears. Enter a reason why the merge is correct and click **"Finish Merge."** The record will be updated with the information you chose to add or replace. The duplicate record will be archived. A note will appear in the change history documenting the merge so it can be undone if needed.


Records That Cannot Be Merged

Some records in Family Tree cannot be merged. You cannot merge records in the following situations:

- The gender on one record is male and the gender on the other record is female.
- One record indicates the person is alive; the other is deceased.
- Both records come from the membership records of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- One of the records has restrictions that would prevent it from being changed.

If Family Tree has already identified possible duplicates that cannot be merged, they appear beneath the list of possible duplicates.

DUPLICATE AND MERGING TIPS

- Before starting a merge, know what information is correct. If possible, have documents to support data.
- The person on the left is the primary person. This person (and ID number) will remain. The person on the right will be archived (or deleted) after a merge.
- If you're not sure of dates or relationships, CANCEL THE MERGE and DO SOME RESEARCH! Do not assume. When in doubt, do not merge.
- Be careful when merging and only merge individuals that you know are duplicates. If there are no dates or places to identify the person, he or she is probably not a duplicate and should not be merged.
- Within a family, resolve duplicate parents before resolving duplicate spouses and children.
- The Possible Duplicates tool may not find any duplicates.
- To make sure there are no duplicates, click on the Find button  at the top of the page and do a manual search. If a duplicate appears, copy the ID number, go back to the Possible Duplicates tool and choose Merge by ID. Type in the ID number and click Continue. That duplicate record will appear, ready to be merged.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHILE MERGING:

- Photos, stories, sources, notes, discussions and LDS temple ordinances found on the person on the right, will automatically transfer during the merge.
- Any duplicate spouses and children on the right side need to be transferred to the left side before a merge. Moving all duplicates to the left side, makes finish merging duplicate family members easier. If duplicates are not brought over, they still remain in the system as duplicates.
- If incorrect relationships are on the right, bring them over. Then address them by deleting the relationships after completing the merging process.

ADDITIONAL HELP WITH MERGING ISSUES

ANSWERS TO MERGING QUESTIONS USING THE HELP CENTER

Go to familysearch.org and sign in with your FamilySearch account username and password.

1. Click on Get Help.
2. In the drop-down box, click on Help Center.
3. The Help Topic page will appear.
4. Click on the Family Tree Icon.
5. Under Frequently Asked Questions, type desired topic, like “merging.”
6. Titles of related articles appear in blue. Click on a title to view the instructions.

ACCESSING TRAINING VIDEOS AND SANDBOXES FOR FAMILY TREE

1. Go to familysearch.org
2. Click on Get Help. (top right)
3. Then click on Learning Center in the drop-down menu.
4. Under the Most Popular Courses section, click on Family Tree Training Lessons & Videos
5. Next, click on “View This Lesson”
6. Click on the Level Two button.
7. Scroll down to lessons on Possible Duplicates and merging.



FAMILY TREE BETA

Go to beta.familysearch.org

This will bring up an old copy of Family Tree. You will see your own data and family lines. You may practice merging, fixing relationship problems, etc. on this database. Anything changed or added to this beta version of Family Tree will not change the actual Family Tree database.